

## ABSTRACT

Antigen-specific antibodies ~~oaf of~~ enhanced sensitivity and specificity to target bacterial carbohydrate antigens which are characteristic of either a bacterial species, or a serogroup of a bacterial species, and are selected from among lipo-polycarbohydrate antigens, antigens comprising a lipoteichoic acid or a teichoic acid or a derivative of either and capsular carbohydrate antigens may be obtained by (1) ~~extraction-separation~~ from a culture of known gram-negative or gram-positive bacteria of an embodiment of the said target carbohydrate antigen containing not more than 10% protein by weight, (2) coupling the separated target antigen embodiment conjugate to an affinity column, (3) passing raw polyclonal antibodies to the target antigen or an IgG cut thereof over the affinity column and (4) eluting from the column purified antibodies specific to the target antigen. A rapid immunochromatographic test is described in which the thus purified antibodies are used to detect in a mammalian bodily fluid the target antigen, ~~or the bacterium from which it was extracted thereby identifying the bacterium from which is was obtained, and permitting, when combined with clinical patient observations, the rapid diagnosis of a patient's disease state~~. Use of the said purified antibodies in any ~~known-other~~ test for the purpose of detecting the presence or absence of target antigen (or and hence of target bacterium) in a test sample is ~~further~~ also contemplated.